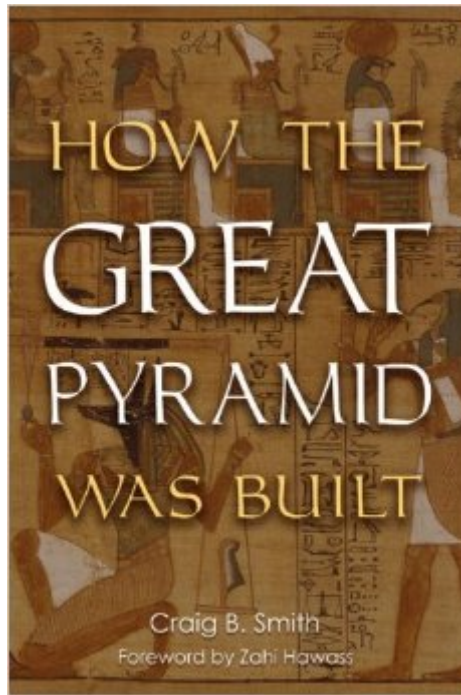


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How The Great Pyramid Was Built



Synopsis

Going beyond even the expertise of archaeologists and historians, world-class engineer Craig B. Smith explores the planning and engineering behind the incredible Great Pyramid of Giza. How would the ancient Egyptians have developed their building plans, devised work schedules, managed laborers, solved specific design and engineering problems, or even improvised on the job? The answers are here, along with dazzling, one-of-a-kind color photographs and beautiful hand-drawn illustrations of tools, materials, and building techniques the ancient masters used. In his foreword to the book, Egypt's Undersecretary of State for the Giza Monuments Zahi Hawass explains the importance of understanding the Great Pyramid as a straightforward construction project.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The reader will have one question in mind after finishing "How the Great Pyramid Was Built": is this a book about Ancient Egypt, utilizing the tools of project management? Or a book about project management, using the Great Pyramid as an extended example? However, the answer is probably moot. Both project managers and Egyptophiles will gain excellent insights from reading Craig Smith's book. Dr. Zahi Hawass, the director of the Supreme Council of Antiquities in Egypt, provides the foreword. The analysis of the necessary infrastructure and the organization of the workforce is thorough and engrossing. This book is not for the alternative theorist, but rather for the historically- and archaeologically-minded reader. One minor quibble: Smith appears to assume that the

Egyptians knew that a triangle with sides of unit length 3, 4, and 5 would form a right triangle, whereas Richard Gillings (Mathematics in the Time of the Pharaohs) firmly rejects this notion. Still, they would seem to have had some sort of square or carpenter's ell. The first chapter, a general historical survey of ancient Egypt, does not add anything new, but is a good reminder for the casual reader and serves to anchor the building of the Great Pyramid in its historical era. All in all, a fascinating analysis that belongs on the shelves of both project managers and those interested in Egypt's most famous monument.

This is a very interesting and thoughtful book. In large part, it is engaging and well written, and the author has done a lot of background research, analysis, and careful thinking. The book presents very interesting material, and carefully justified speculations. In the end, I find the ramp scenario implausible, at least as the major method of lifting most of the stones. There are several reasons for my skepticism, but one is this: the author's ramp scenario involves, for example (cf. p. 182) at course 9, 34 teams side by side, 12 teams in sequence, and 42 laborers per team, for a total of $34 \times 12 \times 42 = 17,136$ men on the ramp at one time ... this sounds rather impractical. Unless I've misunderstood, there is also an important technical error in the analysis: On p. 211 it is mentioned parenthetically that the author assumed friction increased the required force by 50%, and a footnote explains that this arises from assuming a friction coefficient 0.5. But this friction coefficient would mean that the friction force is half the normal force, which for the assumed slope of 1:6 is close to the weight of the block. So the friction force is about half the weight, whereas the tangential component of the gravitational force is around 1/6 the weight. That is, rather than 50 percent more work, friction adds 300 percent more work.

Craig Smith is a construction management professional whose visits to see the Great Pyramid piqued his interest in how a massive project like this was built. Using modern CM tools, he has convinced me, also a construction person, that this pyramid was built using the best construction methods and, having the superior contractors, engineers, and architects that Egypt had 4600 years ago, the pyramid was completed in just 8 years. Some of the highlights of the book are: the workers were not slaves, all the materials furnished were "just in time," and a Necropolis more enormous than the pyramid was built next to it, and hardly a trace remains.

This is a great book! It is well written, covers a fascinating subject in an interesting manner, and is clear enough for non-engineers and scientists to enjoy. Using modern engineering systems and

concepts, Mr. Smith explores, in depth, the many issues involved in building the Great Pyramid at Giza. He covers the design, the materials and their transport, the actual construction, and the labor. As an added bonus, the author provides substantial information about ancient Egyptian life and death and explains how their culture affected the design and construction of the Great Pyramid. Throughout the book, Mr. Smith lays out the known facts (with attributions), the conclusions he draws from those facts, and, most importantly, the reasoning that leads him to his conclusions. For anyone who has ever wondered how an ancient society, lacking most modern tools and knowledge, was able to build a structure on this grand scale and have it last for 4,000 years, this is the book for you.

The information provided by the author is only verbal. Would have been helpful if there are drawings/plans showing how the pyramids were built.

Good read, very informative about how the pyramids were built, used it for class and it helped me ace it!

I received the product very quickly and was as described

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